



## **Arlington Disability Commission**

**Date:** Wednesday, June 21, 2023

**Time:** 4:00pm

**Location:** Conducted by Hybrid Participation

**Attendees:** Grace Carpenter, Paul Raia, Michael Rademacher, Kerrie Fallon, Cynthia DeAngelis

**Guests:** Tim Ross, Christine Bongiorno, Linda Zimmern, Rebecca Gruber

**Absent:** Ileana Gatica, Paul Parravano

### **Agenda**

1. Call to Order, Read Ground Rules, Welcome
  - a. Carpenter first, Rademacher second
2. Ground rules
  - a. [Please don't use Zoom chat/messaging during the meeting, unless that is your primary way to participate in a meeting. The co-chairs have disabilities that make it hard to deal with Zoom chat/messaging]
3. Approve Draft May Meeting Minutes
  - a. Rademacher motion to approve, Carpenter seconded
4. Guest Introductions
5. Budget Presentation
  - a. Health and Human Services Director Christine Bongiorno presented on the budget process. Our fiscal year is July 1 through June 30<sup>th</sup>. Each year the commission gets \$25,000 which has been in place for the past few years. Previously it was set to \$3,000.
  - b. FY24 DC budget was reduced to \$20,000 by Finance Committee.
  - c. What are the true needs of the disability community and what should we be advocating for? Our commission would benefit from commissioners going to FinComm meetings.
  - d. Tim will begin recapping work the Town is doing at each commission meeting.
  - e. Commissioner DeAngelis stated we should plan ahead for spending instead of waiting until the end of each FY.
  - f. Commissioner Rademacher stated he thinks FinComm wants to see this Commission pushing other departments to complete ADA issues. We could pay for consultants to give feedback on specific issues and then hand that over to the department to complete the work.
  - g. Commissioner Carpenter stated the commission lacks someone to lead our finances.

- h. Tim to draft DC letter of support for prioritizing projects.
- i. Commissioner Fallon suggests we invite Department Heads to our meetings.
  - i. Also noted we could survey residents at Town Day for issues they want to see fixed and include that in our letters of prioritizing projects.
- j. Kari Sasportas suggested the commission to start thinking strategically. When is the ideal time to get a letter advocating for our priorities out? Rademacher stated Capital budgets begin with Department Heads making requests to Town Manager usually in August. DH requests are submitted in a five year plan.
  - i. Asked if we have a working group?
  - ii. Asked if any commissioners would like to volunteer to work on the Transition plan.
- 6. Commissioner Updates
  - a. Kari Sasportas is awaiting confirmation from the Select Board.
  - b. Janice Cagan-Teuber has been confirmed by the Select Board.
- 7. ACMi Commissioner Series
  - a. Commissioner
- 8. Town Day
  - a. Commissioner DeAngelis reached out to the Puppet Show folks but has not heard back from. Also sent Commissioner Carpenter a list of priorities.
  - b. Commissioner Carpenter asked if anyone would like to volunteer to take on planning. Commissioner DeAngelis offered to head planning but that we really need volunteers.
  - c. Bags of candy to give out.
  - d. Banner for our table.
  - e. Commissioner DeAngelis stated we should have someone with a clipboard and surveys to hand out, gather more info from residents.
  - f. Kari Sasportas stated when gathering input from the public, an open ended question can be difficult to answer. We could have a poster board with categories of areas of improvement (sight or hearing based, neurological, mobility, etc.). Stickers, magnets, other swag. For sensory related disabilities, fidget spinners or balls that you can squeeze.
  - g. Commissioner Fallon suggested handing out adaptive equipment (grip assistors, kitchen equipment).
- 9. Subcommittee reports
  - a. DEI
  - b. DPW
    - i. Started to move into new building at Grove Street.
    - ii. Still planning general projects, nearing completion of Chestnut Street pedestrian improvements.
    - iii. Rebuilt area near Russel Common parking lot.
  - c. CODA
    - i. Well attended meeting. Kerrie gave an update on playgrounds and the floating beach wheelchairs. Newburyport hired a group with mental health
  - d. Outreach Working Group
    - i. Farmer's Market volunteers
- 10. Informal Chats After Meeting
- 11. Public Comment
- 12. Next meeting Wednesday July 19, 2023 at 4PM
- 13. Closing

Commission members not able to attend please email [dei@town.arlington.ma.us](mailto:dei@town.arlington.ma.us) prior to the scheduled meeting.

Anyone needing accessibility information or other assistance in order to attend this meeting should contact [dei@town.arlington.ma.us](mailto:dei@town.arlington.ma.us). This meeting is open to all interested individuals.